

Winning nomination submitted by Bay of Plenty Coast Rowing Club

We are a small, local grassroots rowing club run entirely by volunteers. Our fees are set on a cost-recovery basis and as such, we are always looking for financial help so that this fantastic sport can be enjoyed by a wide section of the community. Our motto is "A Place of Excellence".

Our club was founded in 1992 by four people passionate about the sport. (One of those founding members is still a major part of the Club today.) At the time, there was a demand for people to row competitively, recreationally and socially away from the harbour waters, where rowing was mainly restricted to early morning trainings. They also wanted to get away from the perception of the sport as elitist. Our Club aims to entice people from all backgrounds to come and try the sport and stay around for the myriad benefits that it provides.

Our Club caters for a broad cross-section of members, from young competitively focused school and club rowers, through to masters who enjoy combining fitness and fun with some competition. We draw our school rowers from Bethlehem, Waihi and Katikati Colleges and some local intermediates. The Club provides all the resources and equipment required by the rowers: this includes coaches, rowing skiffs (training and racing plant), oars, safety boats and delivery of equipment to regattas.

Covid-19 lockdown has negatively affected the Club in a number of ways:

- We suffered two vandalism events (including attempted arson);
- Our major annual fundraising event was cancelled;
- Unforeseen expenses were incurred complying with Government requirements;
- We had to refund members who were forced to withdraw their membership;
- Volunteer hours have been significantly reduced as members struggle with stress and job losses – putting a heavier burden on remaining volunteers.

Bay of Plenty Coast Rowing Club would like to use the Tauranga Crossing Grant to purchase megaphones for all six of our safety boats. As you are probably aware, rowers face the "wrong" way when rowing and rely on the safety / coach boat driver to alert the crew to any oncoming peril such as another boat not obeying the Coast Guard rules or a tree floating in the water after a storm. Currently, our coaches have to shout to be heard above the engine noise, which is a risk in an emergency. Blue Ocean loudhailers are waterproof, floatable and have a siren to get the prompt attention of the rowers. Bay Coast have six safety boats which can be on various parts of the river at any one time. Bay Coast would like each safety boat to have its own loudhailer to improve the safety of our rowers. The cost of these is \$4,859.19 (GST inclusive) including gear bags for safe storage.

It is said in rowing circles that the road to hell is 8 lanes wide and 2 km long. This is why you will find that rowers are disciplined, determined and resilient and they excel in teamwork and fortitude.

